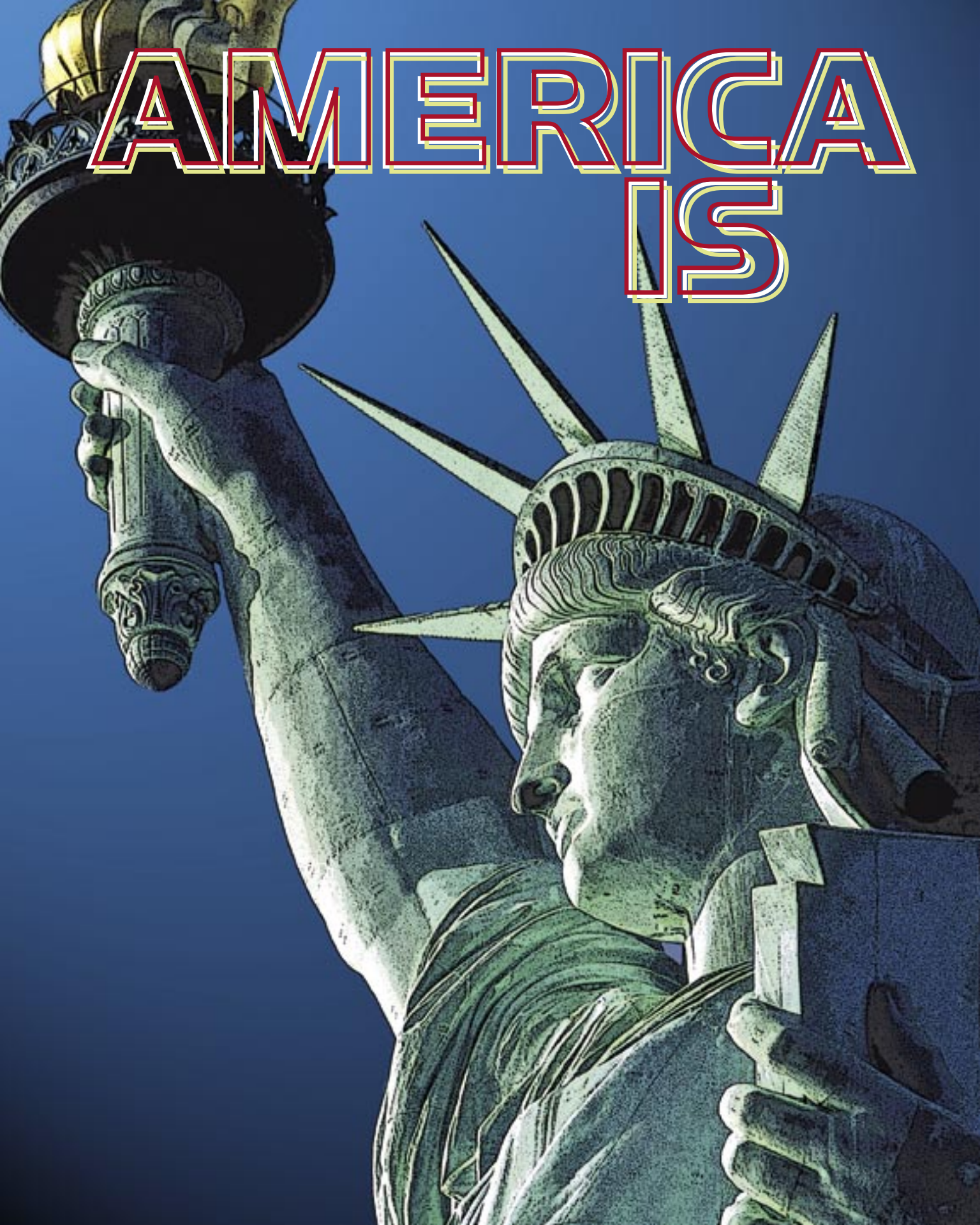


AMERICA IS



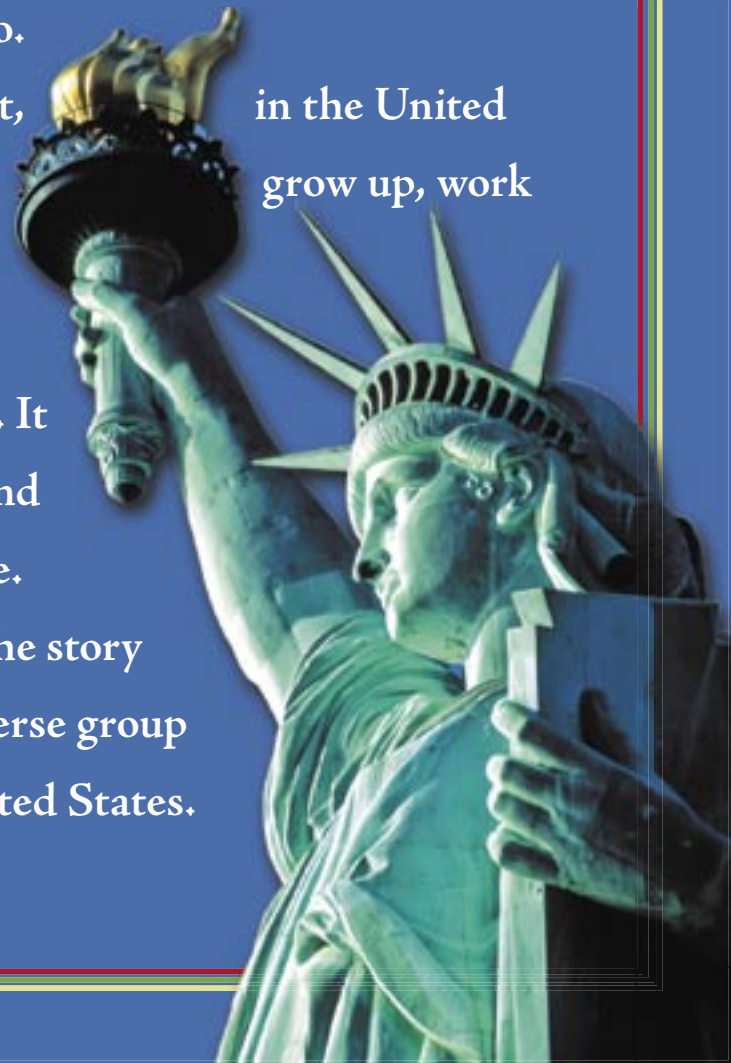
AMERICA IS

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America is a collection of more than 300 million individuals. Some of us live in big cities; others in the countryside, near the beach, or high in the mountains. Americans come in all different colors and nationalities. We practice different religions, and live many different lifestyles. Although we do not always agree with each other, and although our country may at times be imperfect, we are united by a very special thing: the values and ideals that were originally described in the U.S. Constitution over 200 years ago.

We all share the hope that, in the United States, a child born today can grow up, work hard, and fulfill his or her dreams. It's a hope that unites us even during times of trouble. It is our wish that all people around the world can share in this hope.

The pages that follow tell the story of America's values and the diverse group of people who make up the United States.



America is ...

**made up of families who love
and care for one another.**



LOVE OF FAMILY



“The family is the link to our past and the bridge to our future.”
— Alex Haley, author of *Roots*

America is ...

made up of thousands of communities,
and pitching in to make them better
is an American tradition.

COMMUNITY





“We are a nation of communities ... a brilliant diversity spread like stars, like a thousand points of light in a broad and peaceful sky.”

— President
George H.W. Bush

America is ...

**a place where one person can
make a positive difference.**



INDIVIDUALITY



“We are each responsible for our own life — no other person is or even can be. ... What I know for sure is that what you give comes back to you.”

— Oprah Winfrey, TV producer and philanthropist

America is ...

**founded on the belief that
government should serve the people,
not oppress them.**

LIBERTY AND FREEDOM





The Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776

IN CONGRESS, JULY 4, 1776,
A DECLARATION
BY THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,
IN GENERAL CONGRESS ASSEMBLED.

When in the Course of these events, a small number of unprincipled men, who were not only ignorant of the rights of the people, but also of the duties of their office, had the impudence to declare, that the Congress had no authority to declare independence, and that the only way to obtain it, was by force of arms. These men, who were the only ones who were not in favor of the Declaration, were the only ones who were not in favor of the Declaration.



“Freedom is not the sole prerogative of a lucky few, but the inalienable and universal right of all human beings.”
— President Ronald W. Reagan

America is ...

a country where the laws
and courts are expected to
treat people fairly.

JUSTICE





U.S. Supreme Court, Washington, D.C.



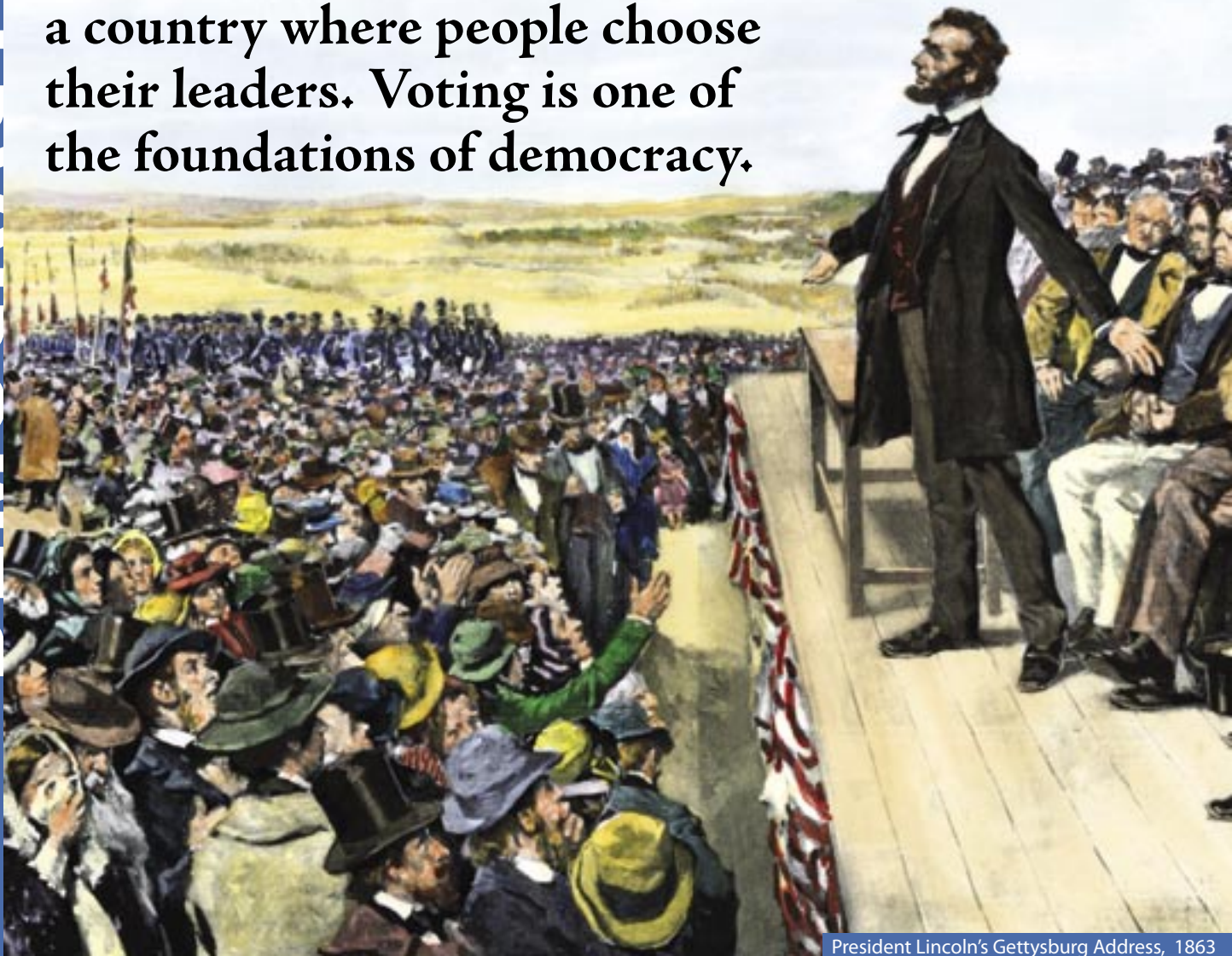
“Justice is indiscriminately due to all, without regard to numbers, wealth, or rank.”

— Supreme Court Justice John Jay

America is ...

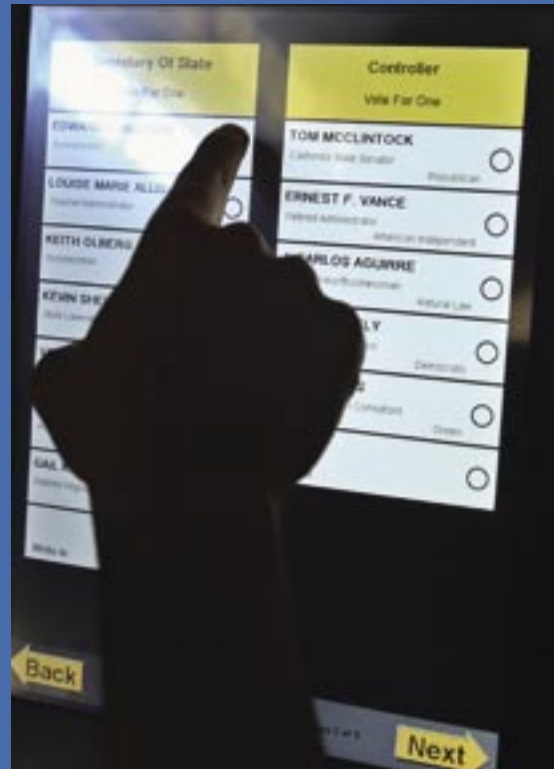
a country where people choose their leaders. Voting is one of the foundations of democracy.

DEMOCRACY



President Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, 1863





“It’s not the hand that signs the laws that holds the destiny of America. It’s the hand that casts the ballot.”

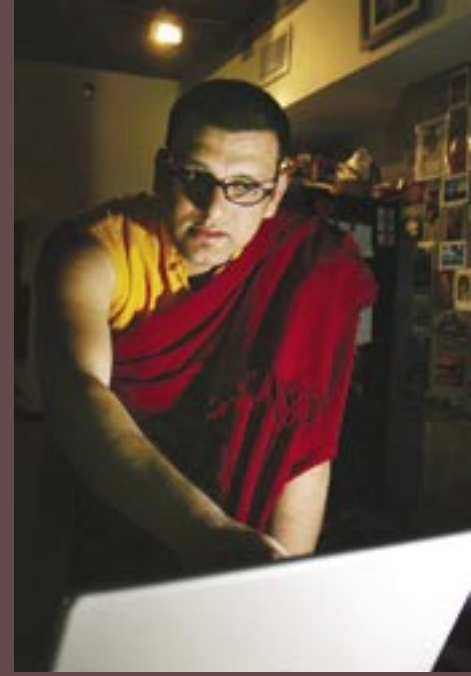
— President Harry S Truman

America is ...

**a country where people can
worship as they choose and
all religions are respected.**

FREEDOM OF FAITH





“The impulse to seek
God overflows the
banks of a single
religious tradition.”

— Elaine Pagels,
scholar and author

America is ...

where the voices of citizens are not silenced. Different views can be discussed openly.

FREEDOM OF SPEECH





FREE SPEECH
4
STUDENTS



“Ideas won’t go to jail. In the long run of history, the censor and the inquisitor have always lost. The only weapon against bad ideas is better ideas.”
— Alfred Whitney Griswold, former president of Yale University

America is ...

a country that helps others.

COMPASSION



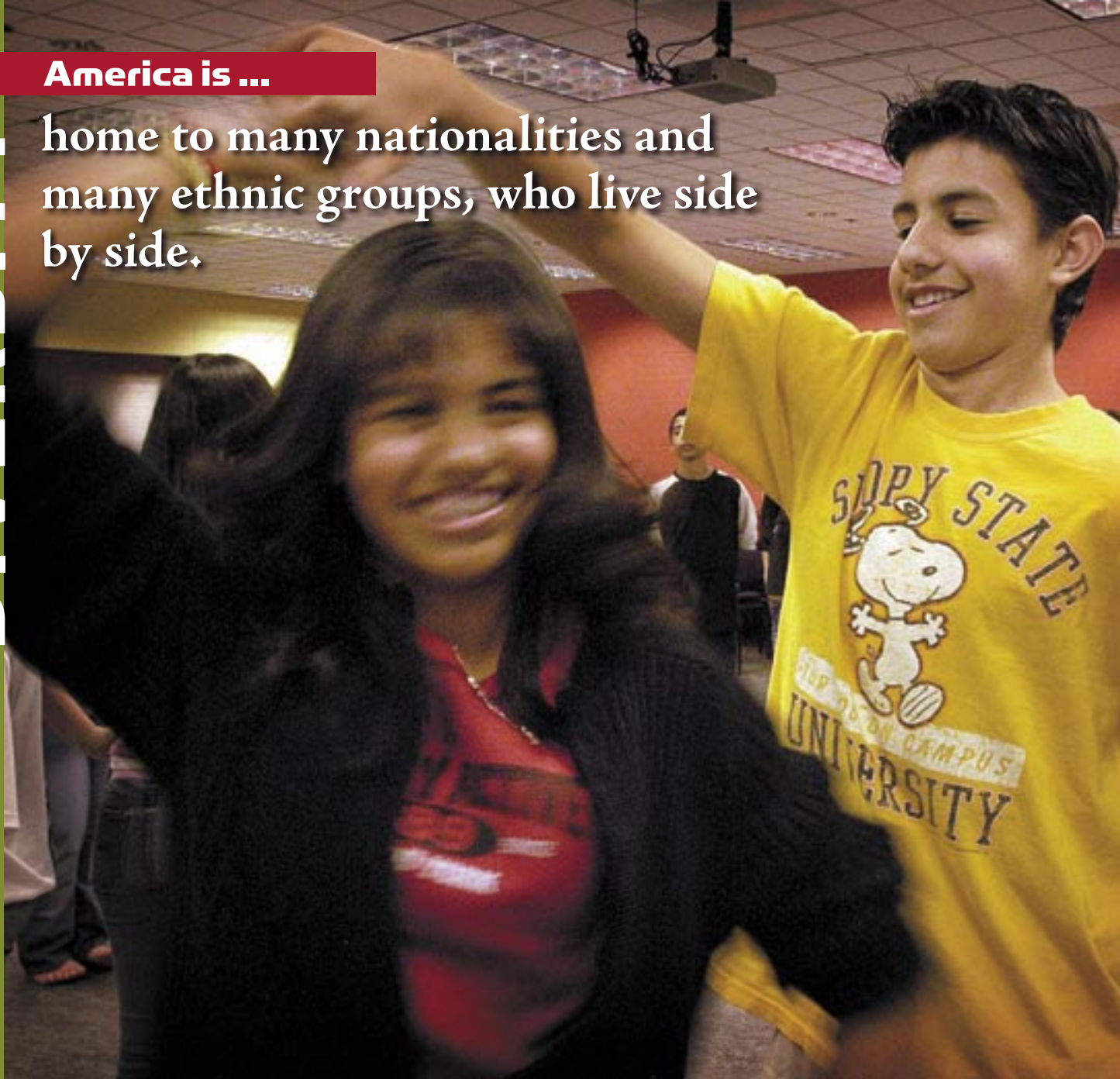


“If there is any kindness I can show, or any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.”

— William Penn, founder of the U.S. State of Pennsylvania

America is ...

home to many nationalities and many ethnic groups, who live side by side.





“Diversity of our country is a great strength. It’s a good thing that we have people of all faiths and cultures that come here and we all support one constitution.”

— Rep. Keith Ellison, the first Muslim elected to the U.S. Congress

America is ...

where people are treated equally no matter what their color, religion, gender, or place of birth.

EQUAL RIGHTS





“What everyone in the astronaut corps shares in common is not gender or ethnic background, but motivation, perseverance, and desire — the desire to participate in a voyage of discovery.”

— Astronaut Ellen Ochoa

EDUCATION

America is ...

a place where you can study and learn to be whatever you want.





Foreign exchange students in West Virginia



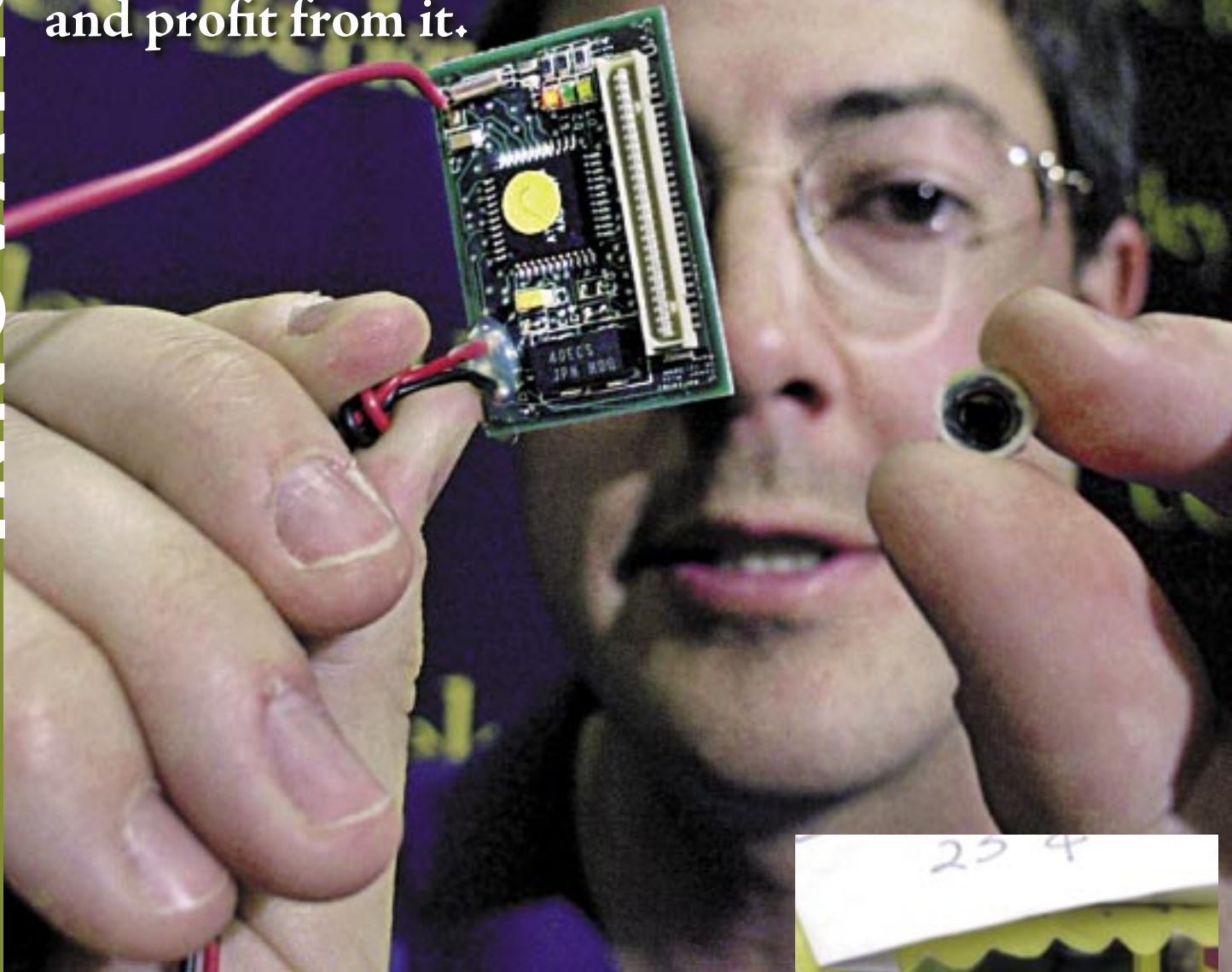
“Education is a way to completely and totally become who you should be, who you want to be, who you ought to be. It opens the mind. It opens the heart. It opens the horizons.”

— Secretary of State
Condoleezza Rice

America is ...

a country where anyone
can invent a new idea
and profit from it.

INNOVATION





“Never before in history has innovation offered promise of so much to so many in so short a time.”

— Bill Gates,
founder of the
Microsoft company

America is ...

a place where there are boundless ways to better one's life!





“I had a dream when I was five years old to be a figure skater. After a few years of competing, I realized that it takes more than just dreaming to make your dreams come true. It takes a lot of hard work and discipline. I encourage you to work hard and to stay positive and dream. Have big goals and stay motivated, because dreams do come true.”

— Olympic Skater Michelle Kwan,
the first U.S. Public Diplomacy Envoy

America is ...

**a place where you can
hope for a better life.**

HOPE





Special Olympian



Champion Cyclist Lance Armstrong

“Keep your face to the sunshine and you cannot see the shadow. It’s what sunflowers do.”

— Helen Keller, deaf-blind author and humanitarian

“It’s amazing what ordinary people can do if they set out without preconceived notions.”

— Ben Stein, American writer and actor

UNITED STATES OF



AMERICA



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Fourth of July fireworks,
Washington, D.C. 2006

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